

AN OPEN LETTER TO DEAN ACHESON

"THE MARINE CORPORAL IS RIGHT!"

By
MAX SHACHTMAN

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INTRODUCTION

ON SUNDAY, MARCH 4, 1951, THE PRESS CARRIED THE UNUSUAL DOCUMENTS DISCUSSED IN THE ACCOMPANYING OPEN LETTER TO DEAN ACHESON. A CORPORAL IN THE U. S. MARINES, FIGHTING IN KOREA, JOHN MOULLETTE, HAD WRITTEN A LETTER TO HIS FATHER, IN WHICH THE SOLDIER GAVE VOICE TO THE BITTERNESS WHICH (AS SO MANY CORRESPONDENTS HAVE TESTIFIED) HAS BEEN INCREASINGLY WELLING UP IN THE MINDS OF THE MEN AS THEY ASK EACH OTHER: "WHAT ARE WE FIGHTING FOR?" JOHN MOULLETTE'S FATHER WROTE TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT, REQUESTING AID IN ANSWERING HIS SON. HE GOT IT FROM THE HIGHEST QUARTER: ACHESON HIMSELF. THE STATE DEPARTMENT, CONSIDERING ACHESON'S REPLY TO BE OF PROPAGANDA VALUE, MADE THE WHOLE CORRESPONDENCE PUBLIC.

WE ARE REPUBLISHING HERE THE "OPEN LETTER" WHICH MAX SHACHTMAN ADDRESSED TO DEAN ACHESON, TAKING UP THE POINTS ADUCED BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE IN HIS REPLY TO CORPORAL MOULLETTE, AND PRESUMABLY, THE FIGHTING MEN FOR WHOM THE CORPORAL SPOKE.

COMRADE SHACHTMAN DOES MORE, HOWEVER, THAN ATTEMPT TO ANSWER JUST THIS ONE QUESTION. HE SEEKS TO EXAMINE THE ENTIRE SITUATION WHICH GAVE RISE TO THE KOREAN WAR AND, WHAT IS DIRECTLY RELATED TO IT, WHY AMERICA IS FIGHTING A WAR ITS PEOPLE DO NOT WANT AND DO NOT UNDERSTAND. FOR ALL OF THOSE WHO ARE CONFOUNDED BY "THE NEEDLESS WASTE OF LIFE IN KOREA," THE AUTHOR EXAMINES THE BASIC SOCIAL ROOTS OF THE PRESENT CONFLICT, AND POINTS OUT WHAT, IN OUR OPINION, CAN BE THE ONLY SOLUTION TO THE PRESENT INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT WHICH GIVES RISE TO A KOREA.

HOWEVER THE KOREAN CONFLICT MAY ULTIMATELY BE SOLVED, ITS BASIC AND UNDERLYING CAUSES WILL NOT BE REMOVED. IT IS THESE CAUSES WHICH MUST BE UNDERSTOOD, AND ONCE UNDERSTOOD, ABOLISHED.

THE SOCIALIST YOUTH LEAGUE, HOPING TO CREATE SUCH AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE PRESENT CAUSES OF WAR AND INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT, PRESENTS THIS PAMPHLET AS AN EXPRESSION OF ITS VIEW,

MAY, 1952

AN OPEN LETTER TO DEAN ACHESON

Sir:

YOU HAVE SEEN FIT TO MAKE PUBLIC YOUR LETTER TO MR. CLARENCE E. MOULLETTE, HIS LETTER TO YOU ABOUT THE VIEWS OF HIS SON, MARINE CORPORAL JOHN MOULLETTE, AND THE LETTER OF THE SON TO THE FATHER. IT MAY NOT, THEN, BE CONSIDERED INAPPROPRIATE IF I WRITE A LETTER TO YOU ON THE SAME SUBJECT OF FOREIGN POLICY AND IF I TOO MAKE IT PUBLIC.

FRANKLY, I WOULD RATHER ADDRESS MYSELF TO CORPORAL MOULLETTE. IT IS HIS LETTER WHICH SAYS WHAT MILLIONS OF OTHERS ARE THINKING AND SAYING, AND YOUR REPLY, IN FACT, ACKNOWLEDGES IT.

BUT I MUST REFRAIN, AS YOU KNOW, FROM DISCUSSING WITH JOHN MOULLETTE. YOUR POLICE AND PROSECUTORS HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THAT THEY REGARD IT AS "SUBVERSIVE" FOR A SOCIALIST TO TALK ABOUT PEACE AND FREEDOM TO AN AMERICAN SOLDIER WHO HAS BEEN CALLED UPON "TO TAKE UP AGAIN THE DEFENSE OF FREEDOM," AS YOU SAY; WHILE IT IS REGARDED AS THE HIGHEST PATRIOTISM TO TALK TO HIM ABOUT RENOUNCING HIS FUTURE AND LAYING DOWN HIS YOUNG LIFE IN A WAR "WE WERE TRICKED INTO," A "NEEDLESS WASTE OF LIFE IN KOREA, ON BOTH SIDES (WHICH), IS SHAMEFUL TO THE HUMAN RACE," AS THE MARINE SAYS. SO YOU WILL UNDERSTAND WHY I ADDRESS

MYSELF NOT TO HIM, BUT TO YOU.

YOU CONSIDER IT IMPORTANT THAT THE MARINE FEEL, "AND THAT ALL OUR YOUNG PEOPLE FEEL, A STRONG FAITH IN THE VALIDITY AND THE REALITY OF THE IDEALS ON WHICH THIS COUNTRY WAS FOUNDED AND ON WHICH IT NOW ENDEAVORS TO GUIDE ITS ACTIONS." SO FAR AS THE LETTER OF JOHN MOULLETTE REVEALS, HE DOES NOT LACK FAITH IN THE IDEALS OF PEACE AND FREEDOM WHICH YOU PROCLAIM. IT IS YOU AND YOUR ADMINISTRATION HE HAS NO FAITH IN.

IF YOU HAD PLANNED IT DELIBERATELY, YOU COULD HARDLY HAVE UNDERMINED HIS FAITH IN YOU MORE SURELY THAN YOU HAVE IN THE PAST FEW YEARS. YOUR LETTER DOES NOTHING TO RESTORE IT. CORPORAL MOULLETTE MAKES SPECIFIC CHARGES AND PROPOSALS. YOUR REPLY IS PHRASED IN THE MOST ELOQUENT OF GENERALITIES.

THE SOLDIER IS NOT SPEAKING FOR HIMSELF, BUT FOR HIS COMRADES, "NOT ONE OR TWO, BUT THE MAJORITY." HE IS TELLING HIS FATHER---AND YOU---WHAT HAS LONG CEASED TO BE A SECRET: "THE MORALE OF THE FIGHTING MAN IS VERY LOW." DID YOU EXPECT IT TO BE OTHERWISE? DO YOU EXPECT TO CHANGE IT BY REPEATING THE GENERALITIES HE HAS ALREADY HEARD A THOUSAND TIMES FROM WASHINGTON? DO YOU THINK THAT SAYING IT JUST ONCE MORE WILL REALLY CHANGE THE VIEWS WHICH MILLIONS SHARE WITH THESE SOLDIERS, WHO "AREN'T AFRAID TO FIGHT, IT'S JUST THAT THEY HAVE NO CAUSE TO FIGHT?"

NO FAITH IN YOU

THEY HAVE NO FAITH IN YOU, IN YOUR ADMINISTRATION, IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE FATE OF THE COUNTRY YOU WERE CHOSEN TO PRESIDE OVER, BECAUSE THEY BELIEVE, TO QUOTE AGAIN THE STRONG AND RIGHTEOUS WORDS OF THE SOLDIER, "WE WERE TRICKED INTO THIS."

WHAT DO YOU SAY IN YOUR LETTER TO ALTER HIS CONVICTIONS? WHAT CAN YOU SAY? IT WAS YOU YOURSELF, MR. SECRETARY, WHO ANNOUNCED TO CORPORAL MOULLETTE AND THE REST OF THE WORLD A YEAR AGO LAST JANUARY THAT KOREA DID NOT LIE WITHIN THE SPHERE OF DEFENSE INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT. NOBODY, THEN, CONTRADICTED YOUR STATEMENT, AND NOBODY WHO LISTENED THEN HAS FORGOTTEN IT.

IT WAS THE PRESIDENT HIMSELF WHO, A FEW MONTHS AFTERWARD, ANNOUNCED, IN ORDER TO JUSTIFY HIS PURELY PERSONAL DECISION TO SEND TROOPS TO KOREA, THAT ONLY A POLICE ACTION WAS INVOLVED. NOBODY WHO HEARD HIM THEN HAS FORGOTTEN IT, EITHER.

LET THE PEOPLE DECIDE

NOW, EVEN EVERY CHILD, AND ABOVE ALL THE SOLDIERS THEMSELVES KNOW THAT THE UNITED STATES IS ENGAGED IN A FULL-SCALE WAR IN KOREA, AND HAS BEEN FROM THE VERY FIRST DAY. ONLY THE ADMINISTRATION SPOKESMEN TRY TO MAINTAIN THE PRETENSE THAT IT IS NOT A WAR. "THE LEADERS (INCLUDING TRUMAN) ARE AFRAID TO ADMIT THEY ARE WRONG, AND ARE ASHAMED TO ADMIT IT FOR FEAR THEY WILL LOSE FACE." THE MARINE KNOWS WHY YOU MAINTAIN IN THE PRETENSE, YOU SEE.

YOUR LETTER IGNORES THE MATTER WHICH OUTRAGES THE PEOPLE. IT SPEAKS INSTEAD OF FIGHTING AND PREPARING TO FIGHT FOR "THE PRINCIPLES OF FREEDOM AND JUSTICE." EVEN IF THAT IS WHAT YOU ARE DOING, AND I DENY IT IN FULL, DO YOU THINK YOU CAN GET THE PEOPLE TO FIGHT FOR SUCH EXALTED PRINCIPLES BY TRICKERY AND DECEPTION?

THE PEOPLE ARE TIRED OF THAT, NOT ONLY HERE, BUT EVERYWHERE ELSE. THEY FEEL THAT THEIR WISHES, THEIR OPINIONS, ARE BEING CIRCUMVENTED

AND THWARTED. THEIR FEELINGS, SO AUTHENTICALLY VOICED BY JOHN MOULLETTE, ARE ALL TOO JUSTIFIED.

THEY FEEL THAT EVEN THE CONGRESS--YOUR OWN CONGRESS--IS BEING CIRCUMVENTED AND THWARTED BY THE ADMINISTRATION. "I THOUGHT THAT ONLY CONGRESS COULD DECLARE WAR," WRITES THE MARINE CORPORAL BITTERLY. THAT IS WHAT HE WAS TAUGHT IN SCHOOL. NOW HE SEES HOW WAR CAN BE DECLARED BY PRESIDENTIAL DICTUM ALONE, AND CAN BECONTINUED IN THE FACE OF WIDESPREAD UNPOPULARITY, NOT ONLY AMONG THE PEOPLE OF THE COUNTRY, BUT EVEN AMONG THE CONGRESSMEN.

YOU ARE A CHAMPION OF POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY, MR. SECRETARY, ARE YOU NOT? TAKE AN OFFICIAL POLL OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ON THEIR WILL WITH REGARD TO THE WAR IN KOREA, SO THAT WE MAY ALL SEE WHETHER IT IS YOU OR CORPORAL MOULLETTE WHO SPEAKS FOR THE MAJORITY.

I KNOW YOU WILL NOT TAKE OR SPONSOR SUCH A POLL. A FRENCH STATESMAN ONCE SAID THAT WAR IS TOO SERIOUS A BUSINESS TO ENTRUST TO THE DECISIONS OF GENERALS. DO YOU BELIEVE THAT WAR IS TOO IMPORTANT A BUSINESS TO ENTRUST TO THE DECISIONS OF THE PEOPLE? DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THE QUESTION OF WAR OR PEACE IS BEST LEFT IN THE HANDS OF THE GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES AND ITS "MILITARY EXPERTS"?

THE WAR WAS FUTILE

WHY SHOULD ANY SANE PERSON AGREE TO LET THE POWER TO DECIDE THIS QUESTION REST IN THE HANDS OF THOSE WHO HAVE MADE SUCH DISASTROUS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE STATE IN WHICH THIS AND ALL OTHER COUNTRIES FIND THEMSELVES TODAY? WHAT ARE THEIR QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE EXERCISE OF THIS POWER--THE WHOLE GOVERNMENT STAFF, THE DEMOCRATIC ADMINISTRATION AND THE

REPUBLICAN OPPOSITION, MILITARY CHIEFS AND DIPLOMATS, INCLUDING YOURSELF, MR. SECRETARY? WHAT IS THE RECORD OF RECENT TIMES, ACCORDING TO YOUR OWN LETTER?

YOU WRITE: "FOR OUR COUNTRY, AND FOR MOST OF US AS INDIVIDUALS, THE PERIOD WHICH HAS PASSED SINCE V-E DAY AND V-J DAY HAS BEEN ONE OF CRUEL DISAPPOINTMENT, SLOWLY FORMING RESOLUTION, AND FINALLY, GREAT DETERMINATION AND EFFORT. THE HIGH HOPES, FOR WHICH GREAT SACRIFICES WERE MADE DURING THE WAR, DID NOT COME TO READY FRUITION."

IT WAS FOR THESE HIGH HOPES THAT THIS COUNTRY WAS TAKEN INTO THE SECOND WORLD WAR, AND IF IT ENDED WITHOUT THESE HOPES BEING REALIZED, THE ONLY CONCLUSION POSSIBLE IS THAT ALL THE BLOOD SPILLED, THE SUFFERING ENDURED AND THE WEALTH DESTROYED WENT FOR NOTHING. THE PROBLEM OF PEACE AND FREEDOM REMAINS UNRESOLVED. THE HIGH HOPES REMAIN UNFULFILLED; THE SECOND WORLD WAR WAS FUTILE. IT IS YOU WHO SAY IT. DO YOU EXPECT THAT TO ENCOURAGE CONFIDENCE IN YOU AND YOURS?

YOU ADMIT THAT THE ASPIRATION FOR WORLD PEACE WAS NOT REALIZED, EVEN THOUGH "WE CAME VERY CLOSE" TO IT. "HOWEVER, AS IT BECAME CLEAR THAT THE RULERS OF THE SOVIET UNION NOT ONLY WERE NOT INTERESTED IN COOPERATING WITH US, BUT WERE CHALLENGING THE SURVIVAL OF OUR FREE INSTITUTIONS, AND THE INDEPENDENCE OF ALL NATIONS, WE HAVE BEEN OBLIGED TO BUILD UP OUR STRENGTH AGAIN, ALL OF US... IT HAS FALLEN TO US--TO YOUR SON'S GENERATION AND TO OURS--TO TAKE UP AGAIN THE DEFENSE OF FREEDOM AGAINST THE CHALLENGE OF TYRANNY."

THE MEMORY OF THE PEOPLE IS NOTORIOUSLY SHORT

BUT NOT SO SHORT AS TO FORGET THAT YOU AND YOUR COLLEAGUES AND PREDECESSORS IN OFFICE WROTE AND SAID VIRTUALLY THE SAME WORDS ONLY A FEW YEARS AGO, IN 1940 AND 1941. IN THOSE DAYS TOO, YOU URGED THE CORPORAL MOULLETTES AND THE REST OF THE PEOPLE TO HAVE A "STRONG" FAITH, FOR YOU HAD TO LEAD THEM THROUGH FIELD AFTER FIELD OF BLOOD AND DESTRUCTION NEVER BEFORE KNOWN, BECAUSE IT "BECAME CLEAR" THAT "WE HAVE BEEN CALLED TO BUILD UP OUR STRENGTH AGAIN... TO TAKE UP AGAIN THE DEFENSE OF FREEDOM AGAINST THE CHALLENGE OF TYRANNY." YOU TOOK UP THE CHALLENGE, BUT IT APPEARS THAT YOU MADE A MISCALCULATION SOMEWHERE, AN ERROR.

LITTLE MATTERS. YOU ARE READY TO TRY ALL OVER AGAIN. YOU ARE READY, BUT THE PEOPLE ARE NOT. NOT YOUR WAY, AND NOT UNDER YOUR LEADERSHIP. THEY ARE ANTAGONISTIC, SUSPICIOUS, DOUBTFUL, OR, AT BEST, PERPLEXED. WHY SHOULDN'T THEY BE? YOU AND THOSE LIKE YOU LED THEM INTO THE SECOND WORLD WAR, WHICH, YOU TELL THEM NOW, DID NOT SOLVE A SINGLE ONE OF THE FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEMS--ABOVE ALL THE PROBLEM OF PEACE AND FREEDOM--WHICH, THEY WERE ASSURED JUST AS EQUALLY AND SOLEMNLY THEN, THE WAR AND THE AMERICAN VICTORY WOULD SOLVE. IT IS YOU WHO SAY IT--NOT IN 1939 AND 1941 WHEN WE SAID IT, BUT TODAY, IN 1951. IS THAT YOUR WARRANT FOR CONFIDENCE AND SUPPORT?

YOU, AND THOSE LIKE YOU, HAVE LED AND ARE NOW KEEPING THIS COUNTRY IN A DREADFUL WAR IN KOREA, WHICH IS AS FUTILE AS IT IS REACTIONARY. YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND IT OR YOU REFUSE TO, BUT MARINE MOULLETTE DOES UNDERSTAND. WHEN HE WRITES THAT "THE NEEDLESS WASTE OF LIFE IN KOREA, ON BOTH SIDES, IS SHAMEFUL TO THE HUMAN RACE. FIGHTING WON'T SETTLE ANYTHING."

WHAT DOES IT MATTER WHO "WINS" THE WAR IN KOREA NOW, IF, INDEED, EITHER OF THE TWO INVADERS, YOU OR THE STALINISTS, CAN EVER WIN IT? I KNOW VERY WELL WHAT THE STALINISTS OFFER KOREA AND HER PEOPLES: THE YOKE OF TOTALITARIAN SLAVERY, THE ROLE OF THE HELPLESS PAWN IN THE WORLD STRUGGLE FOR IMPERIALIST POWER.

WHAT HAVE YOU OFFERED?

BUT WHAT HAVE YOU OFFERED? FIRST, THE DETESTABLE REGIME OF SYNGMAN RHEE, KILLER OF THE ASPIRATIONS OF HIS OWN PEOPLE. NOW, A WAR, SYMBOLIZED BY THE SADISTIC HORROR OF "OPERATION KILLER," WHICH IS TURNING EVERY FIELD AND MOUNTAINSIDE OF KOREA INTO A CEMETERY AND EVERY TOWN AND VILLAGE INTO A BURNING RUIN. WHAT DOES THE WAR, OR ITS OUTCOME, MATTER NOW TO THE MARTYRED KOREAN PEOPLE, WHOSE LAND AND HOMES AND INDUSTRY AND SONS AND FAMILIES YOU HAVE SO CALLOUSLY HELPED DESTROY?

YOU REPLY TO THE MARINE, WHO IS SICK AT THE FUTILITY OF THE WAR YOU ARE CONDUCTING, BY SAYING THAT KOREA "HAS ALREADY PROVED A GREAT DEAL." "BY STANDING FIRM AGAINST AGGRESSION IN KOREA, WE ARE DOING OUR BEST TO PREVENT THE WORLD FROM FOLLOWING THE ROAD WHICH LED US, TWICE IN RECENT TIMES, TO WORLD WAR."

ONE THING IS TRUE: KOREA IS THE BEST YOU CAN SHOW. THAT "BEST" IS A SMALL-SCALE ANTICIPATION OF THE BLOODY WORLD CHAOS, THE POINTLESS AND HOPELESS CHAOS, THAT IS IN STORE FOR ALL OF US. CORPORAL MOULLETTE IS ONLY ONE OF THE COUNTLESS MILLIONS WHO FEEL AND FEAR THAT THERE IS NO COMFORT, NOT AN IOTA OF IT, TO BE DRAWN FROM YOUR RINGING AND HOLLOW PHRASES ABOUT PEACE AND FREEDOM AND JUSTICE.

THAT IS NOT BECAUSE I CHERISH THESE IDEALS

LESS THAN YOU. IT IS NOT BECAUSE I DO NOT THINK THEY ARE IMPERILED BY DANGERS OF ALL SORTS. STALINISM IS NOT THE LEAST OR THE LEAST IMPORTANT OF THESE DANGERS. I THINK I KNOW WHAT IT REPRESENTS AND SIGNIFIES. I DO NOT WANT TO SEE IT IN POWER OVER THE SLAVE EMPIRE IT RULES TODAY, PART OF WHICH YOU HANDED OVER TO THE KREMLIN BEFORE IT "BECAME CLEAR". I DO NOT WANT TO SEE ITS POWER EXTENDED TO OTHER LANDS AND OTHER PEOPLES.

I AM A SOCIALIST, WHICH MEANS I LOVE FREEDOM AS MUCH AS I HATE INJUSTICE. I AM NOT A PACIFIST, WHICH MEANS I AM READY TO FIGHT AGAINST INJUSTICE WITH EVERY MEANS APPROPRIATE TO MY IDEALS AND PRINCIPLES. I AM NO LESS READY TO FIGHT AGAINST THE STALINIST DESPOTISM TODAY THAN I HAVE BEEN FOR THE PAST QUARTER OF A CENTURY.

BUT IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO KNOW WHOM I AM FIGHTING AGAINST; I MUST KNOW WHOM I AM FIGHTING WITH. NOT ENOUGH TO KNOW WHAT I AM FIGHTING AGAINST; I MUST ALSO KNOW WHAT I AM FIGHTING FOR. I MUST KNOW WHY I AM FIGHTING SO THAT I MAY ALSO KNOW HOW TO FIGHT. CORPORAL MOULLETTE WRITES, ABOUT HIS COMRADES, THAT "THESE MEN AREN'T AFRAID TO FIGHT, IT'S ONLY THAT THEY HAVE NO CAUSE TO FIGHT." THEY ARE NOT THE ONLY ONES.

ALL YOU KNOW AND UNDERSTAND ABOUT STALINISM, MR. SECRETARY, IS SUMMED UP IN YOUR STATEMENT THAT THE PEACE AND SECURITY OF THE PEOPLE IS NOW THREATENED "BECAUSE SOME DISTANT AND SHADY FIGURES IN THE KREMLIN, CONTROLLING MILLIONS OF PEOPLE FAR FROM THEM, ARE SETTING OUT TO MAKE IMPOSSIBLE SUCH LIVES AS THEY HAVE EVERY RIGHT AND HOPE TO HAVE...." YOU REGARD YOURSELF A CHRISTIAN.

YOU MUST BE ONE OF THE VERY EARLIEST TYPES WHO BELIEVED IN WITCHCRAFT AND EVIL SPIRITS

THAT CAN BE BANISHED BY FLAMES, MUCH AS YOU ARE DOING WITH "OPERATION KILLER." THERE IS NOTHING DISTANT AND SHADY ABOUT STALINISM. IT IS A MYSTERY TO YOU FOR THE SAME REASON THAT SOME THINGS ARE ALWAYS MYSTERIOUS: YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND IT.

WHY STALINISM THRIVES

STALINISM IS NO MORE THE PRODUCT OF AN EVIL SPIRIT THAN IT IS A CONSPIRACY OF EVIL MEN. IT IS A PROFOUNDLY IMPORTANT SOCIAL PHENOMENON, AND, FOR THOSE CAPABLE OF LEARNING, THE MOST INSTRUCTIVE OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

THAT IS THE CENTURY OF THE DEATH OF CAPITALISM, WHICH YOU REPRESENT AND DEFEND, THE CENTURY WHICH SHOWS MORE AND MORE PLAINLY AND PAINFULLY THAT YOUR SOCIAL SYSTEM HAS OUTLIVED ITS HISTORICAL USEFULNESS AND PROGRESSIVENESS, AND IS NOW AN OBSTACLE TO SOCIAL PROGRESS.

FOR ALL THE APPARENT WEALTH AND POWER OF THIS COUNTRY, YOU, MR. SECRETARY, ARE ONE OF THE REPRESENTATIVES OF A DECAYING SOCIAL ORDER. PROGRESS, AND THE REALIZATION OF ALL THOSE NOBLE IDEALS YOU PROCLAIM--THESE ARE NOW ATTAINABLE ONLY BY MEANS OF THAT FULL ACHIEVEMENT OF DEMOCRACY, WHICH IS SOCIALISM.

FOR REASONS WHICH WILL NOT INTEREST YOU, THE WORKING CLASS OF THE WORLD HAS, THUS FAR, NOT YET ACCOMPLISHED ITS TASK OF ESTABLISHING ITS CONTROL OVER SOCIETY AND SOLVING ITS PROBLEMS ON A SOCIALIST BASIS. BUT THAT FAILURE COINCIDES WITH AN INCREASING INABILITY OF CAPITALISM, INHERENT AND EVER MORE SHARPLY MARKED, TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS OF SOCIETY ON A CAPITALIST BASIS.

I REPEAT: YOU CANNOT EVEN RESOLVE THE SOCIAL PROBLEMS ON A CAPITALIST BASIS; YOU CAN LESS

AND LESS ESTABLISH THAT CAPITALIST STABILITY WHICH THE WORLD ONCE KNEW. THAT IS TRUE ALL OVER THE CAPITALIST WORLD, AND IT IS DIFFERENT IN THE UNITED STATES ONLY IN SO FAR AS IT IS LESS VISIBLE OR OBVIOUS.

THAT IS THE REASON FOR THE CONTINUED DECAY OF SOCIETY TODAY, ONE OF THE MOST OUTSTANDING OF THE SIGNS AND PROOFS BEING YOUR MONSTROUSLY DESTRUCTIVE WARS WHICH LEAD TO NO SOCIAL ADVANCEMENT BUT ONLY TO MORE MONSTROUS AND MORE FUTILE WARS.

AND STALINISM? THAT IS PRECISELY ONE OF THE PRODUCTS OF THE DECAY OF YOUR SOCIAL ORDER, YOUR CAPITALISM, WHEN THE WORKING CLASS FAILS TO TAKE ITS DESTINY OUT OF YOUR HANDS AND INTO ITS OWN!

BECAUSE STALINISM "SOLVES" THE SOCIAL PROBLEMS THAT CAPITALISM CANNOT SOLVE. IT DOES SOLVE THEM IN ITS OWN WAY, TO BE SURE. ITS "SOLUTION" IS THE NEW TOTALITARIAN BARBARISM IT REPRESENTS AND ESTABLISHES. ITS SOLUTION AGONIZES SOCIETY WITH A HUNDRED NEW AND NO LESS OPPRESSIVE PROBLEMS. ANTI-SOCIALIST TO ITS MARROW, IT SUBJECTS THE WORKING CLASS TO THE CRUELEST EXPLOITATION AND TERROR IN HISTORY, WHICH IS WHY I AM ITS IRRECONCILABLE, BITTER ENEMY. BUT IT DOES CRUSH CAPITALISM.

ABOVE ALL, IT THRIVES ON ALL THE INIQUITIES OF CAPITALISM, ON ITS INCREASING SOCIAL AND POLITICAL HELPLESSNESS IN THE FACE OF ITS OWN ROT AND DISINTEGRATION. IT IS YOUR SOCIAL ORDER THAT HAS WHELPED AND NURTURED THIS FOUL BEAST, MR. SECRETARY.

THAT IS WHY YOU CANNOT AND WILL NOT UNDERSTAND IT. THAT IS WHY YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO GIVE THE MAINE CORPORAL A "CAUSE" TO

FIGHT FOR--NOT HIM AND NOT THE TENS OF MILLIONS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD YOU ARE SUMMONING TO YOUR BANNER. THAT IS WHY YOU LASH OUT BLINDLY AGAINST THE "MYSTERY" OF STALINISM WITH A POLICY OF PURELY MILITARY FORCE WHICH IS THE UNFAILING HALLMARK OF YOUR REACTIONARY POLITICAL POLICY.

YES, REACTIONARY! YOU, THE NEW DEALER, THE FAIR DEALER, HAVE A FUNDAMENTALLY REACTIONARY POLITICAL POLICY. THE ONLY POLICY YOU HAVE, NOT THE FINE ONE YOU TALK ABOUT FROM TIME TO TIME BUT DO NO MORE THAN TALK ABOUT, BUT THE ONE YOU ACTUALLY HAVE, TO COMBAT THE STALINIST BARBARISM IS MILITARY POWER BUILT UP BY UNITING WITH REACTION THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

LOOK AT YOUR ALLIES

DO YOU THINK IT AN ACCIDENT THAT YOUR CLOSEST ALLIES IN THE WORLD ARE THE CERTIFIED BEARERS OF REACTION? HOW IS IT THAT YOUR ONLY FRIEND IN CHINA IS CHIANG KAI-SHEK, WHOM YOUR OWN STATE DEPARTMENT'S WHITE PAPER EXCORIATED SO INCISIVELY NOT SO LONG AGO? AND IN KOREA, CHIANG'S REPLICA, RHEE? AND IN EUROPE, THE VATICAN AND THE GERMAN, FRENCH, ITALIAN, PORTUGUESE, BELGIAN AND NOW THE SPANISH PARTIES OF THE VATICAN--THE PARTIES OF CLERICAL OBSCURANTISM AND DEMAGOGY?

HOW IS IT THAT EVEN THOUGH BRITAIN AND INDIA ARE YOUR ALLIES, YOU DO NOT HAVE THE SUPPORT OF THE BRITISH AND INDIAN PEOPLE WHO ARE SATURATED WITH A DEMOCRATIC SPIRIT BUT ARE SUSPICIOUS IF NOT ANTAGONISTIC TO YOUR GOVERNMENT? HOW IS IT THAT YOU CANNOT COUNT AS YOUR SUPPORTERS A SINGLE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD?

YOU CANNOT UNDERSTAND ALL THIS, BECAUSE THE ONLY "CAUSE" YOU HAVE TO OFFER THEM IS THE

DEFENSE OF A SOCIAL ORDER WHICH HAS BROUGHT THE PEOPLES OF THE WORLD SUCH UNSPEAKABLE WRETCHEDNESS AND SUFFERING, TWO WORLD WARS, AND NOW THE THREAT OF A THIRD. THEY DO NOT WANT TO TAKE UP ITS DEFENSE. THEY ARE FINISHED WITH IT.

IT IS NOT TRUE, AS THE BIGOTED AMERICAN CHAUVINISTS SAY, THAT THEY ARE INDIFFERENT TO THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY. THEY HAVE FOUGHT BRAVELY FOR IT BEFORE AND WILL FIGHT FOR IT AGAIN AND AGAIN. BUT THEY DO NOT WANT TO FIGHT FOR YOU AND UNDER YOUR LEADERSHIP, THE LEADERSHIP OF AMERICAN CAPITALISM.

IT IS NOT TRUE EITHER THAT THEY WANT TO FIGHT FOR A TOTALITARIAN STALINIST DICTATORSHIP. EVEN THE VAST MAJORITY OF THOSE EUROPEAN WORKERS WHO FOLLOW THE STALINIST PARTIES, MISGUIDED AS THEY ARE, SIMPLY WANT AN END TO WAR AND CAPITALIST EXPLOITATION AND THE INAUGURATION OF SOCIALISM, JUST AS THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE CHINESE PEOPLE WHO SUPPORTED STALINISM SIMPLY WANTED AN END TO IMPERIALISM AND THEIR OWN LANDLORDS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SOVEREIGN NATION.

I MAY BE A REBEL

TO WIN THEM FOR YOUR FIGHT AGAINST STALINISM, YOU DANGLE BEFORE THEM THE SPECTACLE OF THE ARISTOCRATIC POSITION WHICH THE UNITED STATES STILL ENJOYS IN THE WORLD BUT WHICH THEY CANNOT SHARE, PLUS ADENAUER AND FRANCO AND CHIANG AND RHEE. TO WIN THEM FOR YOUR FIGHT AGAINST STALINISM, YOU OFFER THEM "OPERATION KILLER" IN KOREA, WITH THE PROMISE OF ITS REPRODUCTION IN THEIR OWN COUNTRIES, AND THE REACTIONARY WITCHHUNT AGAINST STALINISTS AND OTHER NONCONFORMISTS HERE AT HOME.

THAT IS ALL YOU OFFER THEM; THAT IS ALL YOU

WILL OFFER THEM; BECAUSE THAT IS ALL THAT AMERICAN CAPITALISM CAN OFFER THEM. THAT IS YOUR BEST INDEED, AND ANYONE WHO EXPECTS BETTER FROM YOU IS WASTING YOUR TIME AS WELL AS HIS OWN.

THAT IS WHY, IN MY OPINION, MR. SECRETARY, THE PEOPLES OF EUROPE AND ASIA AND AFRICA AND THE REST OF THE WORLD, EACH IN ITS OWN WAY, AND TO A DIFFERENT DEGREE, HAS NO REAL CONFIDENCE IN YOU AND YOUR GOVERNMENT AND ITS POLICIES AND ITS WARS AND ITS WAR PREPARATIONS. THAT IS WHY THEY DO NOT WANT TO JOIN IN YOUR FIGHT AGAINST STALINISM, WHY THEY WILL JOIN IN THAT FIGHT ONLY IF THEY ARE DRAGGED INTO IT BY YOU OR THE RELUCTANT GOVERNMENTS BEHOLDEN TO YOU.

THAT IS WHY YOU HAVE, IN THIS COUNTRY TOO, SUCH PROBLEMS AS ARE REPRESENTED BY CORPORAL JOHN MOULLETTE AND BY MILLIONS OF OTHERS WHO ARE AS OBSCURE AS HE WAS UP TO YESTERDAY--OBSCURE, BUT FAR FROM NEGIGIBLE. LIKE OTHERS THE WORLD OVER, THESE MILLIONS ARE BEGINNING TO THINK ALONG THE LINES OF THE CORPORAL WHO SAYS THAT "I MAY BE A REBEL, BUT THESE ARE MY OWN THOUGHTS AND CONVICTIONS."

OPERATION KILLER FOR THE WORLD

LIKE HIM, MANY ARE SAYING TO THEMSELVES: "OUR ONLY HOPE IS THAT OUR AGE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD FEELS THE SAME WAY, AND WILL SAY SO TO ITS LEADERS BY REBELLION OR OTHER WAYS. AFTER THE LOSS OF LIFE AND PROPERTY FROM THE LAST WAR, EVERYONE SHOULD WANT ONLY PEACE."

THAT PEACE THE KREMLIN CANNOT GIVE. NEITHER CAN WASHINGTON. YOU CAN ONLY DRIFT OR DRIVE TOWARD THE THIRD WORLD WAR.

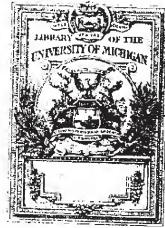
IT MAY BE THAT IN SUCH A WAR, EVEN DECAYING

CAPITALISM MAY CONCENTRATE ENOUGH OF ITS LAST FORCES TO INFILTRATE A MILITARY DEFEAT UPON RUSSIA, AFTER A UNIVERSALLY EXHAUSTING STRUGGLE, AFTER SUCH KILLING AS THE WORLD HAS NEVER HAD THE MISFORTUNE TO SEE, AFTER SUCH PILING UP OF RUINS AS WILL TOWER ABOVE OUR HIGHEST PEAKS, AFTER SUCH A DESTRUCTION OF THE ECONOMY OF THE WORLD AS MAY TAKE GENERATIONS TO SET IN GOOD ORDER AGAIN. "OPERATION KILLER" ON A GLOBAL SCALE WOULD THEN PROBABLY BE THE LAST ABOMINATION OF CAPITALISM.

THAT YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND THIS, BECAUSE YOU CANNOT, IS BAD, BUT NOT YET FATAL. BUT IT WOULD BE TRAGIC AND DISASTROUS IF THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY, IN PARTICULAR THE WORKING CLASS OF THE UNITED STATES, FAILS TO UNDERSTAND IN THE TIME LEFT TO IT TO ACT.

YOU ARE, AFTER ALL, ONLY DOING YOUR BEST TO PERFORM YOUR DUTY TO A DYING SOCIAL ORDER. THE WORKING CLASS HAS NO SUCH DUTY. IT IS, THEREFORE, NOT UPON YOU, BUT UPON IT THAT RESTS THE TREMENDOUS HISTORIC RESPONSIBILITY AND MAGNIFICENT HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY TO LIFT SOCIETY OUT OF THE QUAGMIRE INTO WHICH IT IS BEING SUCKED BY THE USELESS CONFLICTS BETWEEN CAPITALISM AND STALINISM.

IF IT SEIZES THIS OPPORTUNITY AND DISCHARGES ITS RESPONSIBILITY IN TIME--THEN AND THEN ONLY WILL THE HOPE SO FERVENTLY EXPRESSED IN THE LETTER OF JOHN MOULLETTE, SO STRONGLY IMBEDDED IN THE HEARTS OF ALL THE PEOPLE, CEASE TO BE IN VAIN, AND BECOME THE GREAT REALITY.



THE
LABADIE
COLLECTION
ACQUIRED 1912